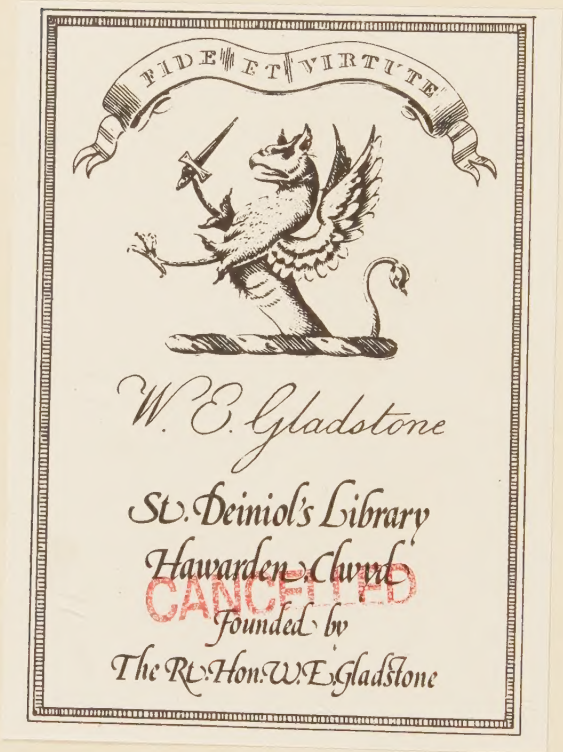
THE USE OF PLAINSONG

EDGAR T. COOK

Plainsong



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THE USE OF PLAINSONG

BY

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Organist of Southwark Cathedral.

1928.
THE PLAINSONG AND MEDIAEVAL MUSIC SOCIETY,
NASHDOM ABBEY, BURNHAM, BUCKS.

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DEDICATED
TO THE MEMORY OF THE LATE
REV. CANON R. WYLDE,
WARDEN OF ST. LEONARD'S,
NEWLAND, MALVERN.

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I. HISTORY

Plainsong (Cantus Planus) is the name given to all music of the Church composed before the invention of harmony or after in the same style. It is pure melody in free rhythm, untrammelled by any harmonic basis or different note-values. The difficulty of attaining this monodic sense is often almost insuperable at first, but it can safely be said that without it there can be no real appreciation of the unique beauty of this music. Just as the Polyphonic Period reached maturity with Byrd and Palestrina, the Contrapuntal with Bach, the Classical with Beethoven, so this earlier music of the monodic period reached maturity about the time of Gregory the Great. Hence the term Gregorian Chant, which is sometimes erroneously applied to the whole of plainsong.

The earliest examples, which date back to the third century are, as one would expect, of a simple character, consisting mainly of simple inflections.

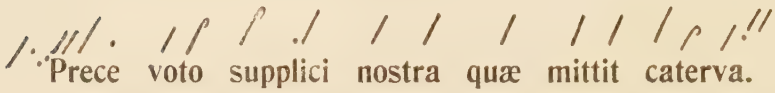
In distinction to this simple style, the Ambrosian Chant of the latter half of the fourth century was much more florid and showed signs of Eastern influence. It was so named after St. Ambrose of Milan who was the leading spirit of Church Music at that time. The Roman Chant of the next two centuries was, in its final form, the most perfect of its kind and has continued to the present day with very little alteration. At times it is less elaborate than the Ambrosian Chant, but the loveliness of its melodic line and the beauty of its phrasing is without parallel.

The Roman Chant was first brought to England by St.Augustine of Canterbury. The two English Uses of Sarum and York were founded upon this (as was also the Gallican Use of France). In the course of centuries the chant became modified or changed according to national characteristics, but it must be borne in mind that the various forms only differ in detail. Fundamentally they are the same.

Plainsong continued to be written for the next seven centuries, that is to say, until the advent of Polyphony, when the necessity of giving notes a definite time value in order to keep the various voices together gradually killed the old free monody. The only plainsong of any importance of later date was lacking in the essential purity of style and tonality. There is no logical reason why plainsong should not be composed now, providing the

atmosphere and outlook of the period is preserved, but it will probably never be done, any more than we shall seek to imitate the works of Byrd, Bach or Beethoven.

Notation.



The current notation of plainsong is derived from the neumatic notation as found in MSS. of the ninth century. This early notation merely reminded singers of the melodies they had already learnt by ear. The signs consisted of the acute accent (´) showing that the note was a relatively high one, and the grave accent (`) showing that the note was a relatively low one. These signs were combined to form note-groups or neums as they are now called, to be sung with one impulse of the voice and a series of these formed a " distinction " or phrase.

In the course of time lines were added and dots placed at the extremities of the accents to show the exact position of the notes. The grave accent figuratively lost its downward stroke and became a plain dot or horizontal stroke, but the acute accent always retained its upward stroke, and this remains in the tailed note of the present notation. A descending series of dots often became elongated like a lozenge or diamond owing to the ease of writing this particular stroke with quill pens. No time value is ever shown in this notation. With the advent of measured music, notes became of definite relative length according to shape, tails, etc., but that does not apply to plainsong notation.

Originally, any letter was used as Clef Sign, now we are content with only three, the C, the F, and the ♭, which are placed at the beginning of the Staff : the C and F on lines and the ♭ in a space, each fixing the name of that line or space. The notes above and below are arranged alphabetically and diatonically in the ordinary way. The only accidental used is the B flat, which in English printing only applies to the particular note to which it is attached.

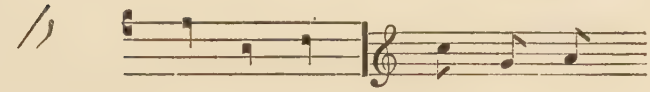
The following is a complete table of notes and neums showing the original form, the present form, and an approximation in modern notation.

Table of Neums.

1.—Single Notes.

Punctum

Virga



Quilisma

2.—Neums of Two Notes.

Pes *or* podatus

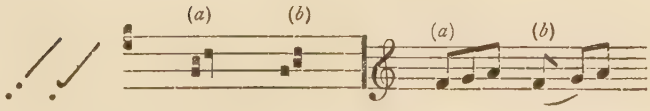
Clivis

3.—Neums of Three Notes.

Porrectus

Torculus

(a). Scandicus
(b). Salicus



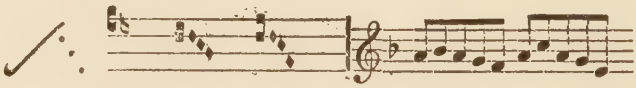
Climacus

4.—NEUMS OF MORE THAN THREE NOTES.

Porrectus flexus

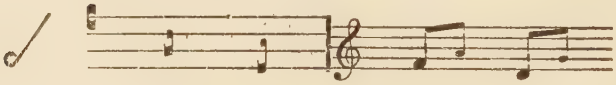
Torculus resupinus

Pes subpunctis



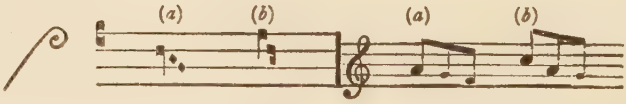
5.—LIQUESCENT NEUMS.

Epiphonus *or* liquescent podatus



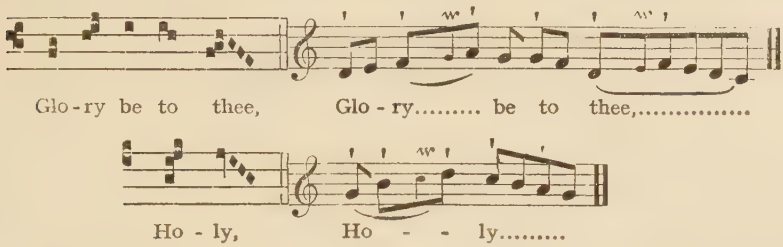
Cephalicus *or* liquescent clivis

Ancus *or* liquescent climacus

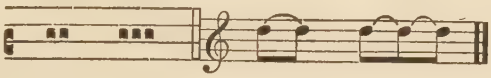


The liquescents are used when the second note becomes shortened, consequent on good pronunciation.

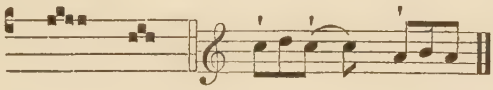
The Quilisma usually occurs between two notes a third apart and has the effect of lengthening the note, or notes which precede it, while the note itself is sung very lightly and quietly. It was possibly a short turn leading to the upper note, but in practice that is seldom attempted now.



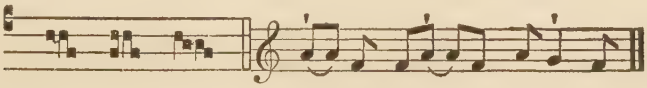
The Strophicus is always double or treble, and always stands alone. It is rendered by touching the penultimate note very lightly. Originally, this was probably sung a quarter-tone below written.



The Oriscus is like the last mentioned, but always comes at the end of a group.



The Pressus is the meeting of two notes in the same degree. The effect is a long note with a strong accent.



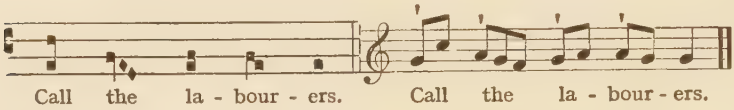
II. RHYTHM AND PHRASING

If plainsong is to be understood and appreciated, it must be sung rhythmically, not stiffly and heavily, but lightly, freely and evenly. This is simple in syllabic chant because the words will always give the required cue. In the more florid (technically called melismatic) chant we have to look to the music itself for the solution. Rhythm is imparted by correct accentuation and the phrasing is shown by slight rallentandos at the end of distinctions, or important divisions of distinctions. If the following rules are carefully noticed it will not be found difficult to achieve satisfactory results.

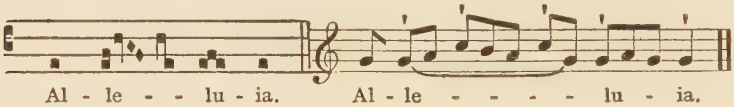
Notes which receive a rhythmical accent.

1. The first note of a group.

(a.) When the group is sung to one syllable.

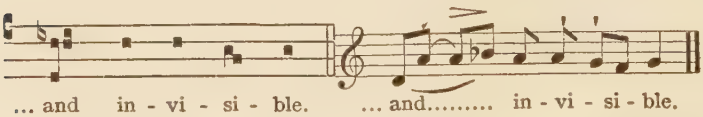


(b.) When several groups are sung to one syllable.

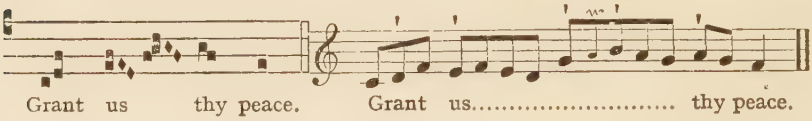


Exceptions :—

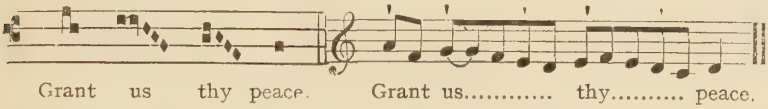
When the second note of a podatus or clivis forms a pressus with the following group.



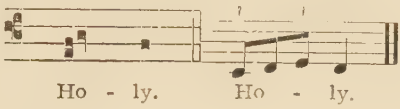
In the salicus the accent goes on the *second* note.



2. The second or third note in a descending passage of four or more notes generally receives a secondary accent. This is shown in some books by a small line in the side of the note.



3. The Virga placed at the end of a group.



Notes which are prolonged.

1. The last note of distinctions or phrases. These are generally marked by a full bar line.

(There should be a rest between phrases.)

2. The last note of divisions of phrases, generally shown by half bar lines.

(Double bar lines are only used as an indication of finality, or to mark divisions to be sung by sections of the choir.)

Care must be taken with breathing, so that there is no break in the continuity of the phrases or hurrying of the concluding notes.

There is no objection to Crescendo and Diminuendo or other tone gradations. In fact, it is desirable, provided it is properly controlled and used with moderation.

Plainsong is no dull and lifeless thing, but an expressive medium of unbounded vitality and power which will test the technique of the singers' art to the utmost before revealing the glory of its vast resources.

III. TONALITY

The tonality of plainsong is that of the old modal system. Most probably practice preceded theory and the greater part of plainsong was composed first, and then arranged and systematised according to finals and dominating notes.

Whatever the history may have been, and it is impossible now to be definite on this point, it is only necessary, for all practical purposes, to have a working knowledge of the system in its finished state.

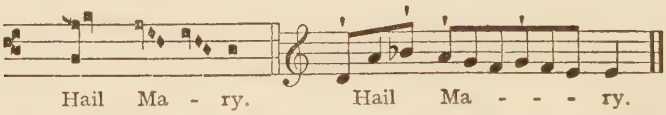
There are eight modes or scales, four authentic, and four plagal, arranged according to range, final, and dominating notes. The following table should make this clear.

Mode.		*Range.*	*Final.*	*Dominant.*
1.	Authentic	D to D.	D.	A.
2.	Plagal	A to A.	D.	F.
3.	Authentic	E to E.	E.	C.
4.	Plagal	B to B.	E.	A.
5.	Authentic	F to F.	F.	C.
6.	Plagal	C to C.	F.	A.
7.	Authentic	G to G.	G.	D.
8.	Plagal	D to D.	G.	C.

The same final is used for both the Authentic and its corresponding Plagal scale. The Dominant of the Authentic is the fifth note of the mode unless this happens to be B, when it is changed to C. The Dominant of the Plagal is the third below that of the Authentic.

All melodies end on the final of the mode, and in psalmodic plainsong the Dominant is always used as the reciting note.

Occasionally the range is extended by a note on either side. In some modes such as 1, 2, 5 and 6, an occasional B flat is introduced for the sake of euphony.

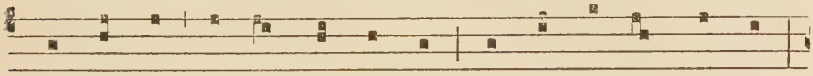


If B natural were used here there would be a bad tritone effect between the B and the F in the next neum.

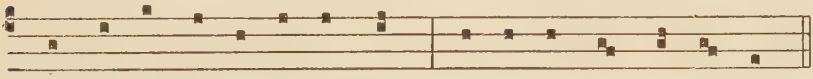
The psalm tones being incomplete in themselves generally require their proper antiphon to bring the melody to its concluding final.

Tone iij—ending 4.

This ends on B. The following antiphon brings it to the final E.



Pre - serve us, O Lord, while wa - king, and guard us while sleep - ing:



that a - wake we may be with Christ, and a - sleep may rest in peace.

Modulation in the modern sense is impossible as every mode has a different arrangement of tones and semitones, but the pitch can be raised or lowered at will to suit the convenience of the singers. For instance, the eighth mode melody last quoted uses the notes of the diatonic scale of C; if lowered a minor third so that the fourth line ends on A, the notes of the scale of A would be used.

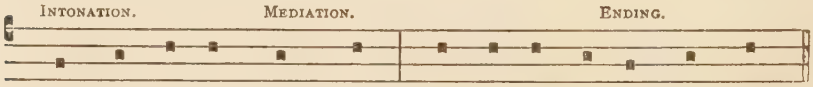
In accompanying transposed melodies, care must be taken to see that no notes extraneous to the mode are introduced.

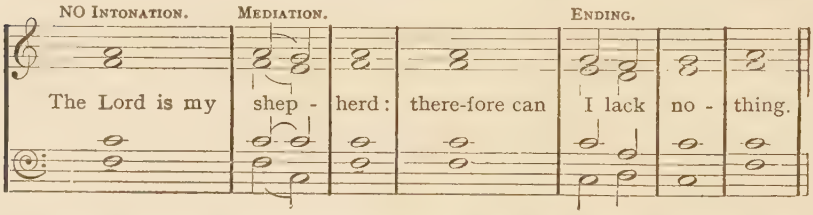
IV. THE CHANTING OF THE PSALMS

THE early Christian Church held the psalms in great reverence and used them as the groundwork of all their services. In the first recorded form of pointing, the Ambrosian of the fourth century, we find only one inflexion for each verse, the chant or tone as it is called consisting of reciting note and inflexion, technically known as the ending.

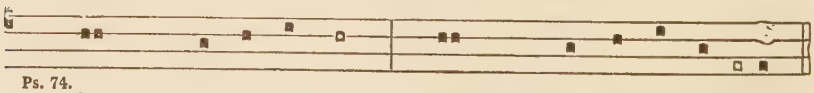
The Gregorian form of two centuries later, which was generally adopted from that time onwards, includes an additional inflexion known as the Mediation, and some initial notes known as the Intonation, used only for the first verse of the Psalm. This form has remained unchanged to the present day and is the basis of all chanting, whether it be to a plainsong tone or to an Anglican chant.

Tone j—ending 4.





There are eight tones corresponding to the eight modes, each with one fixed intonation and mediation, but with varying endings. A complete list of tones and endings will be found at the end of the book. The plainsong tone is an absolutely free medium and allows of the natural speech rhythm in a way that no other medium can approach. Look at the following verses set to tone IV. ending 4, and see how easily and naturally they flow, and how varied is the rhythmical outline in mediation and ending.



Ps. 74.

1. ... absent fróm us so lóng : ... against the sheép of thy pás - tures.
2. ... thy cón-gre - gá - tion : ... púrchased and re-déem-ed of old.
3. ... tríbe of thíne in - hé-ri-tance : ... Sion where-ín thou hast dwélt.

Good chanting must always approximate as closely as possible to good reading. There should never be any hurrying of the recitation or any difference in pace between the recitation and mediation or ending. The traditional short silence at the colon has much in its favour: it is impressive and gives a distinct sense of repose and security. There should always be a slight rallentando and diminuendo on the last note or note-groups of the ending.

As to method of performance: this may vary according to local conditions, but some sort of contrast or variety is to be aimed at, whether it be the alternating of Boys' and Men's voices or Cantors and Full, or even choir and congregation. Tones 3, 5, 7 and 8 require transposing to a lower pitch in order to bring them within the radius of average voices. It is inadvisable to have the same reciting note for all psalms. Penitential psalms will require a lower reciting note than songs of Praise. Besides, variety gives relief to the voices which is always a point to be borne in mind.

The old Latin rules for pointing the psalms have proved to be just as satisfactory to English as to the original Latin. They are as follows:—

Endings.

(a.) The penultimate note or note-group of the ending receives the last accented syllable of the verse, together with a slight rallentando.

(b.) The preceding notes or note-groups are allotted singly to the preceding syllables.

(c.) If the first note of the ending ascends it takes an accented syllable and redundant syllables are fitted in to the remaining notes.

Mediations.

The mediations follow these rules except in cases where the last two notes consist of rise and fall, when if the word is a monosyllable the second note is omitted.

Considering the vagaries of most psalters, these rules are the essence of simplicity, and knowing them, it is quite easy to point from an unmarked book.

The three English Psalters pointed according to this system are the *Manual of Plainsong* (Novello), in which the psalms and canticles are noted throughout, the *Sarum Psalter* (Bell), which allows of any psalm or canticle being sung to any tone or ending, and the *Plainsong Evening Psalter and Canticles* (Faith Press).

These three only vary in scope—equally good results can be obtained from any one of the three. It should be emphasised that the tones must never be judged as pure music—they are merely a convenient medium for the intelligent chanting of the psalms.

V. THE USE OF PLAINSONG

The use of plainsong should be much more general than is the case at the present time. A belief has sprung up that it is exotic, difficult and only to be attempted by choirs who specialise in this kind of music. Another bogey in the path of its adoption has been the feeling that it is bound hand and foot to the Ritual of the Roman Church. Nothing could be further from the truth. It is universal music, a common heritage, and only needs to be known intimately, to be loved and cherished as much as any of the great music of later times. Take as an instance the tune to the hymn "Veni Creator." That is plainsong, but could any tune be more widely known or deservedly popular?

Hymns.

In places where no plainsong has previously been sung, and particularly if there is any prejudice against it, I strongly advocate starting with some of the simpler hymn tunes, which are metrical and, therefore, have, at least, one feature familiar to the modern ear.

The syllabic tunes are sung according to the rhythm of the words with a slight break at the end of each line. The Cantor sings the first line and all join in the second. To give variety of tone and contrast, it is customary to sing alternate verses, boys and men, or cantors and full, but that is a matter of detail and local arrangement.

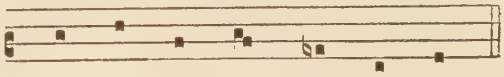
A good selection of tunes can be found in the English Hymnal and Hymns Ancient and Modern (new edition). The following may be recommended as suitable for beginners: E.H. 1, 2, 58, 160, 261, 264 (2nd tune).

Great care must be taken with the last note of each line, because, although the last syllable is an accentuated one, it should never be unduly stressed, but rather sung diminuendo and sostenuto.

Some tunes have occasional, small groups of notes (neums), although the general feeling is still syllabic. They are very much more numerous than the previous class and also much more beautiful. The groups of notes should be sung lightly with a slight stress on the first note of each group. This rule is invariable and applies

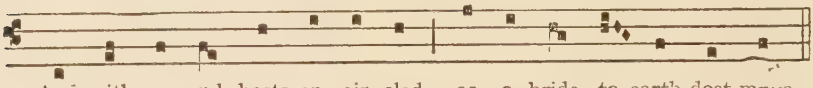
to strong and weak syllables alike. In fact, it will be found that the groups generally come on the weak syllables, probably in a desire to break the monotony of the metrical time.

Take for instance the last line of *Pange Lingua,* E.H. 95,



As a vic - tim won the day.

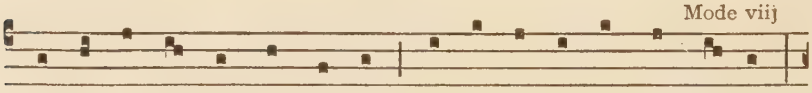
or the last two lines of *Urbs Beata,*



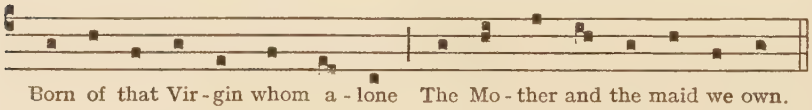
And with an - gel - hosts en - cir - cled, as a bride to earth dost move.

where the only group of four notes comes on the unimportant "to." Sometimes there is a very strong feeling of triple rhythm which is only saved by the inclusion of a neum on a light syllable, as in *Jesu Corona Virginum,* E.H. 192,

Mode viij



Je - su, the Vir-gin's crown, do thou Ac - cept us as in prayer we bow;

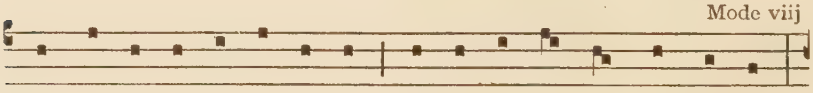


Born of that Vir - gin whom a - lone The Mo - ther and the maid we own.

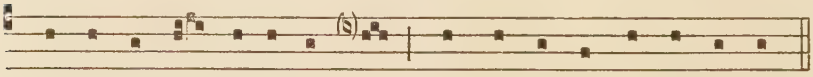
where the clivis in the penultimate syllable of the second and third lines alters the whole rhythmic feeling of the tune.

The addition of these small note-groups will not add materially to the difficulties of the Choirmaster, for the majority of the tunes have a lilt and swing that is unmistakable when they are known. In this connection I may just quote the Compline tune (E.H. 264).

Mode viij



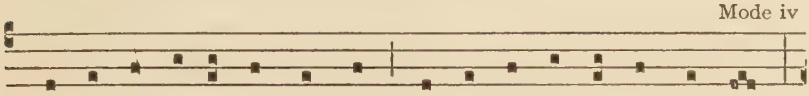
Be - fore the end - ing of the day, Cre - a - tor of the world, we pray



That with thy wont - ed fa - vour thou wouldst be our guard and keep-er now.

The next example is additionally interesting because of its anticipation of form in the modern sense.—

Mode iv



This day the first of days was made, When God in light the world ar - rayed;

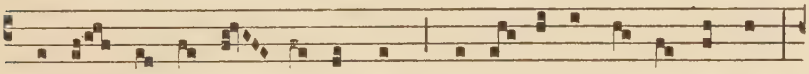
Or when his word a - rose a - gain, And con-q'ring death gave life to men.

Other tunes worthy of notice are E.H. 125, 165, 182, 241, 254, 264 (1st tune).

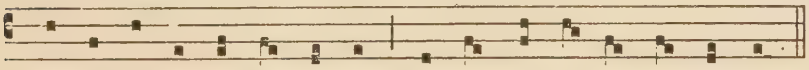
Lastly, there are the still more elaborate tunes with note-groups to nearly all the syllables. Some of the most popular tunes belong to this class, such as *Jesu dulcis memoria* and *Vexilla regis.* It will be found that many besides these have such a wonderful natural rhythm and melodic outline that in spite of their seeming difficulty they will catch the imagination and remain firm favourites. I would ask the sceptic to play or sing either of the tunes given overleaf three or four times, in the firm belief that he will find what I have said to be true.

As the note-groups are not only more numerous but also often longer than those to be found in the tunes of the former class, a more rapid tempo is generally desirable in order to avoid the undue prolongation of separate syllables.

Mode viij

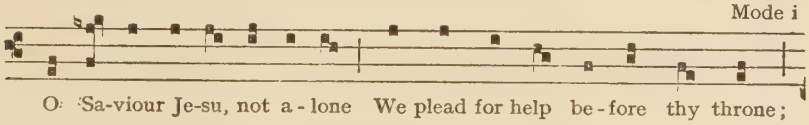


O Light of light, by love in-clined, Je - su, re-deem-er of man-kind,



With lov-ing kindness deign to hear From sup-pliant voi-ces praise and prayer.

Mode i



O Sa-viour Je-su, not a - lone We plead for help be - fore thy throne;

Thy Mo-ther's love shall aid our prayer To win for us that heal-ing care.

Other tunes of this class are E.H. 18, 38, 51, 66, 68 (especially interesting), 122, 164, 175.

Note. All plainsong hymns are, strictly speaking, Office hymns: their proper place is before the Magnificat at Evensong and before the Nunc Dimittis at Compline.

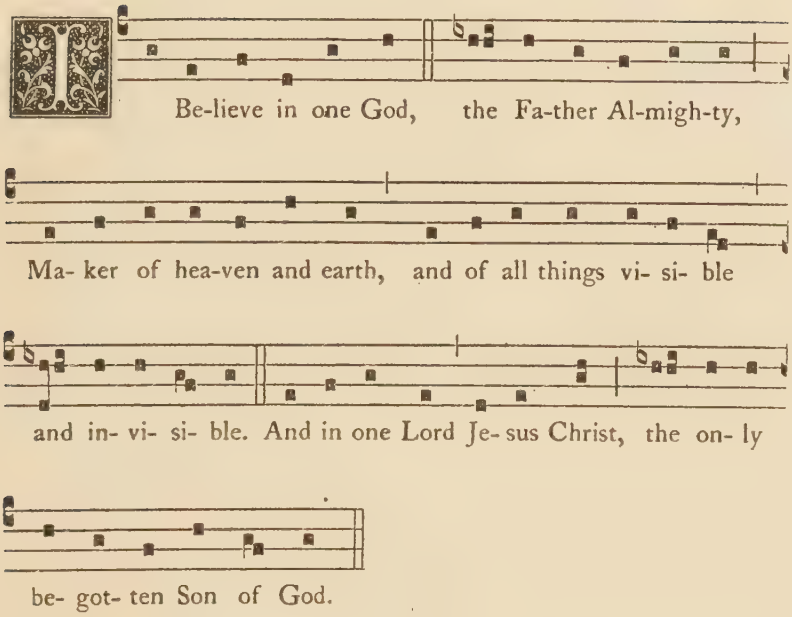
The Ordinary of the Mass.

After the ground has been prepared by popularising some of these hymn-tunes, it should prove an easy matter to obtain acceptance of certain portions of the Ordinary of the Mass. For it must always be borne in mind that the greater part of the prejudice and antipathy that has to be overcome is due to ignorance.

Give Merbecke a rest. His setting was an honest attempt to arrange the plainsong to the new English liturgy, but it was made at a time when plainsong was becoming very debased both in style and performance, and his original Credo, good as it is, is not to be compared with the traditional authentic one, which for the first twelve centuries was the only setting of these words used in the Christian Church.

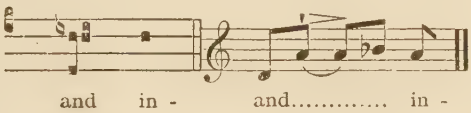
It is in chant form, the inflexions being shortened or lengthened as required to suit the number of syllables in each sentence. It will be found to be essentially singable; and now that it is becoming more and more realised that the congregation should be given a definite part in the singing of the Eucharist, and it is obvious that they cannot take part if the setting is continually being changed, it is surely a step forward to have one simple setting which all will know. The advantage of plainsong in this connection is that no amount of repetition will ever cause staleness, whereas a modern melody with its harmonic basis will become intolerable after a time.

Space will only allow of a short portion being printed here, but it is enough to show the general structure of the chant.



The only difficulty of performance lies in the pressus which comes on " the " and " and " continually throughout the Creed.

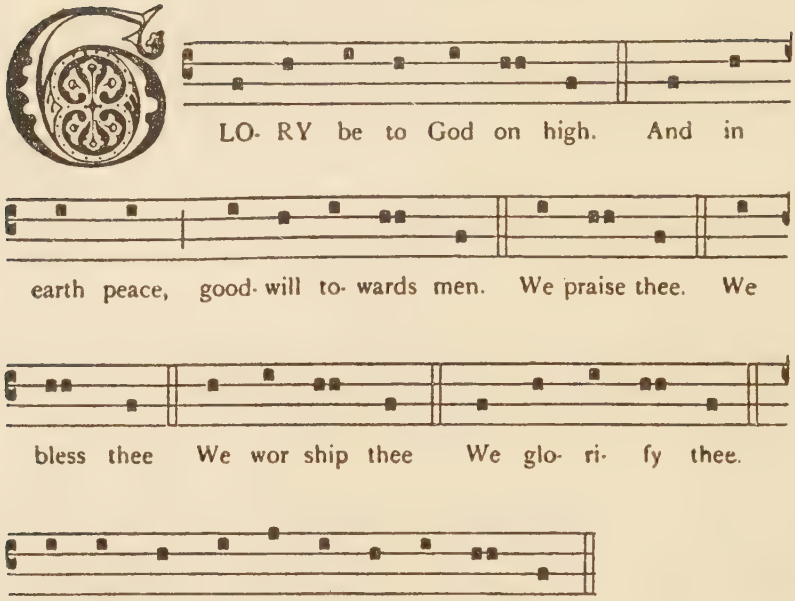
The following will show how this should be sung.



A quick tempo should be adopted with a rallentando at the *Incarnatus.* The phrases shown by the double bar should end piano and sostenuto.

The same arrangement with regard to congregational singing applies in a lesser degree to the Pater Noster and Gloria.

The plainsong Pater Noster is quite as simple as Merbecke and much more musical. Gloria No. VI. from the Ordinary is equally simple and most suitable for the purpose.

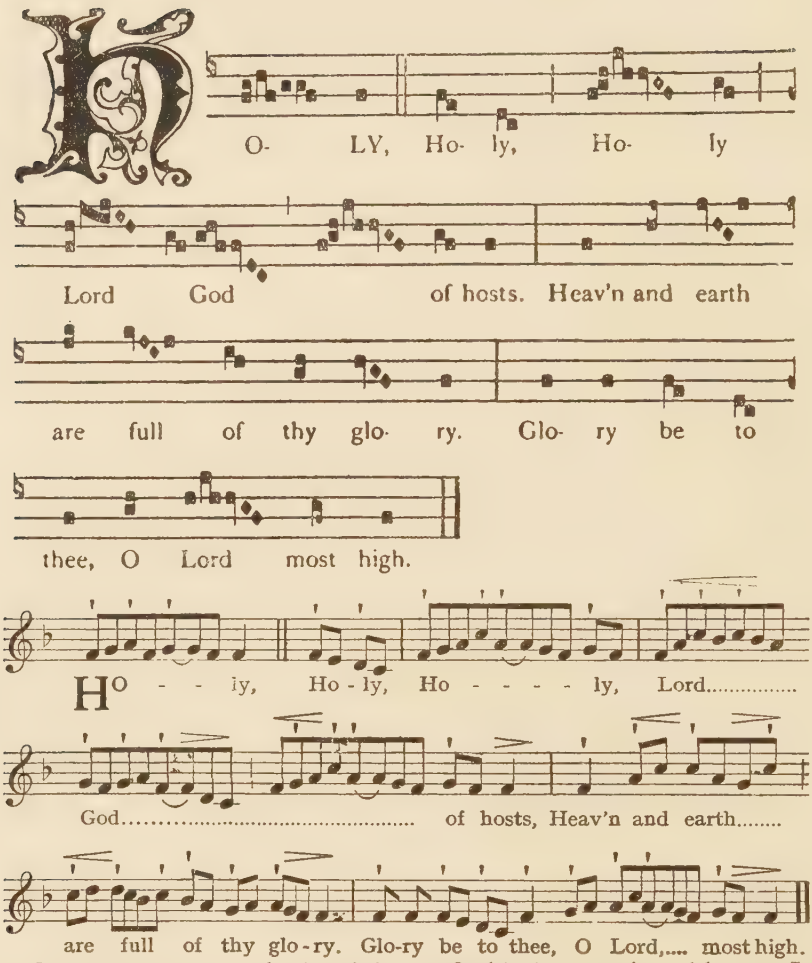


The strophicus should be noticed. The note is always slightly prolonged.

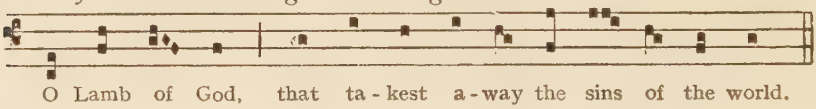
The music to the other parts of the Ordinary, the Kyrie Eleison, Sanctus and Agnus Dei, is rather more elaborate, and although I have known congregations to sing them on their own, it is rather in the nature of a *tour de force*. As a general rule they are intended for the choir. They are extraordinarily beautiful. The vocal line is always grateful to the singer, and no ordinary choir should find their performance exacting. In all this melismatic music the singing should be easy and flowing, never forcing the tone but using a sort of half-voice as the basis. Care must be taken to notice the construction of the compound neums, giving always a slight stress on the first note of all the groups, beside the strong accent on the first note of all. It will be found that if this is done, and the whole thing is sung easily, lightly, and without any striving after emotional effort, the inherent rhythm of the music will be felt quite naturally. The Ordinary of the Mass is published by the Plainsong and Mediæval Music Society, and contains, besides the Credo and Pater Noster, eight settings of the

Kyries, ten of the Sanctus and Agnus Dei, and seven of the Gloria. Some of them are published in a small booklet called the *Plainsong of the Holy Communion,* containing besides the Credo and Gloria, two settings of the Kyrie, Sanctus and Agnus Dei. In cases where it is felt that the plainsong notation is a hindrance and stumbling block to the cause, a start may be made with Royle Shore's arrangements to modern notation, published by Novello, but in this case the choirmaster should carefully study the original notation in order that he may impart the correct rhythm to his singers. It is impossible to show the true rhythm in notes of definite time value, and in writing modern notation this is not attempted. The quaver is now the accepted medium and does little more than show the pitch of the notes to be sung, together with the groupings when more than one note is sung to the syllable.

A particularly flowing and graceful Sanctus is No. II. of the Ordinary. It is interesting to note that the same melody is also used to one of the Magnificat Antiphons. I am giving this in both ancient and modern notations so that the two systems can be seen and judged side by side. It will be noticed that the first syllable of " Holy " is set to a series of seven notes which can be divided into three neums and a pressus. The prolongation of the penultimate note is shown in the modern notation by a repeated quaver. There will, therefore, be a stress on the first note and again on the third and fifth notes together with a pressing of this latter note where the pressus occurs. The final note of all neums should be sung softly. There should be a slight lengthening of the note that ends a phrase or period, such as the words " hosts," " glory " and " high."

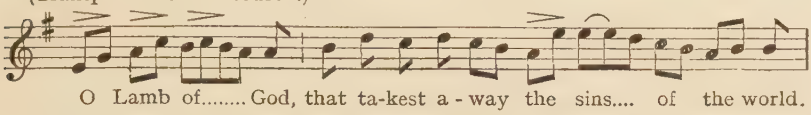


One very common fault might profitably be mentioned here. In modern music, it is an accepted axiom that a rise of pitch implies an accent, and singers unaccustomed to plainsong unconsciously increase their tone when rising to a higher note. It will be seen that this will entirely destroy the symmetry and phrasing of such a melody as the following for the Agnus Dei.



The first three neums *must* be sung with a light second note, also the neum to " the " in the second half.

(Transposed down a fourth.)



All neums, whether rising or falling, are sung lightly. This may seem a redundant remark, but from practical experience, I know that it is one that needs constant attention as it is so essential to a good understanding of plainsong technique.

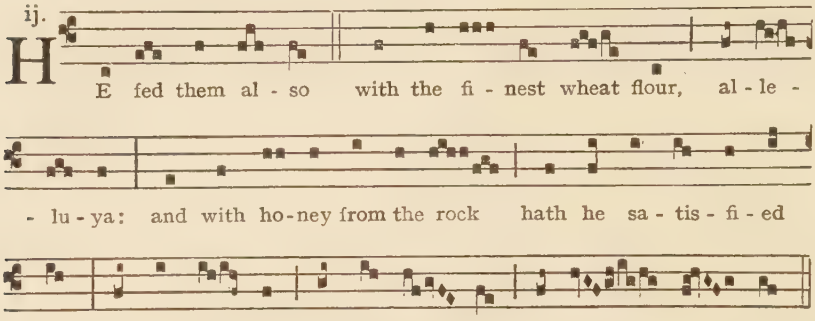
In places where four part harmony has reigned supreme, and where there may be strong prejudice against continuous unisonal singing, a compromise may be made by using Charles Wood's excellent harmonisation of certain numbers from the Ordinary. They are published by the Oxford University Press. These are a great advance on the ordinary style of Communion Service in vogue, and will possibly prepare the way for the real thing, particularly if care be taken to keep the rhythm fluid and free. In other words, the under harmonic parts should run in exact sympathy with the Plainsong melody, with similar phrasing and nuance.

Special (Proper) of the Mass.

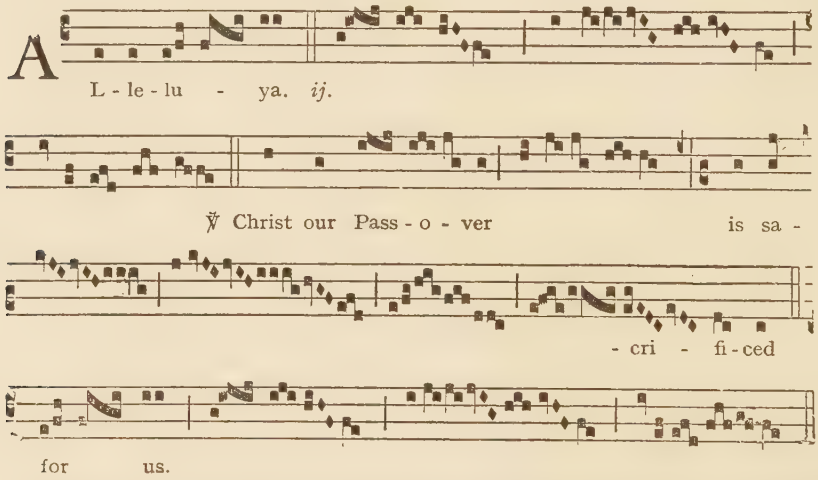
The music of the Special of the Mass (so named because the text varies according to the Season or Festival) is, with the exception of the Gradual and Alleluya, Psalmodic in character. By that is meant the singing of certain psalm-verses or other texts in chant form more or less elaborate and with a refrain or antiphon or alleluya before and after each verse or set of verses. The great majority of these belong to the golden age of plainsong, and although by no means easy, they will repay the labour that may be expended on them. The Introits and Graduals come in this category. In the English Church, the ubiquitous hymn has usurped the place of this Special music, and the loss from a liturgical point of view has been very great. It should be the constant endeavour of all who have authority in such matters to restore them to their rightful place, particularly on the great festivals.

In the Introits, or Offices as they are sometimes called, the psalm-verses are set to a tone. These could be sung full, allotting the antiphon to the more expert members (or member) of the choir.

The following example is typical, both of the type of melody and the general standard of difficulty.



In the Graduals or Grails and Alleluyas only one verse is usual, and the whole music is of a florid character. The following is a particularly pleasing Alleluya.



The Tracts are of the same nature, but even more elaborate and only intended for highly competent solo singers.

A good selection of Introits, Grails and Alleluyas can be obtained from St. Mary's Press, Wantage, bound in a volume; also a selection of Grails, Alleluyas and Tracts for Sundays and Holy Days, and the Introits separately for Sundays and Festivals throughout the year.

Sequences.

The Sequences come into an entirely different category from both Introits and Grails. They originally arose out of the ingenious idea of writing words for the long *jubili* (vocalisations) that are to be found on the final syllable of the Alleluya, which at one time tended to become so long and intricate as to be difficult of memorisation without the help of a text.

The earliest examples are the work of Notker Balbulus, a monk of St. Gall, and are in free rhythm with a prose text. The Easter Sequence, *Victimae Paschali,* is of this type, although not actually by Notker. It is given overleaf, because of its additional interest as showing the dramatic idea of the Passion Music in its infancy.

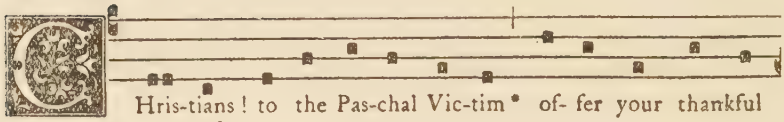
The later Sequences were entirely original compositions, both as to music as well as to text, and became strictly metrical in the manner of hymnody. In fact, some were used as alternatives to certain Office Hymns. The difference lies principally in structure, which will be apparent from the examples quoted.

The style is generally simple, either syllabic or with occasional neums of two or three notes. The melodic interest is of a high order, and although the range is sometimes excessive, this can be got over by the alternative use of boys' and men's voices.

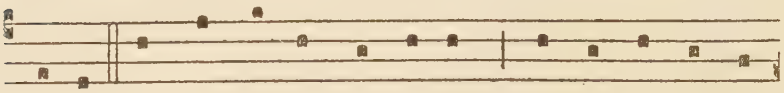
The Roman Church never took kindly to them and has considerably restricted their use, probably because of their metrical nature. However, because of their inherent beauty they have persisted, and it behoves us to consider their claims to a place in our services, particularly when their rightful position between the Epistle and Gospel is either a blank or filled by some second-rate hymn, or when the more elaborate and technical Grail is too difficult for the material available. I might mention that I once heard the Christmas Sequence sung by boys in one of our Cathedrals as an anthem, and nothing could have been more beautiful. One of the Whitsuntide Sequences (reproduced on page 25) is an early example of the use of a metrical refrain.

Easter-tide

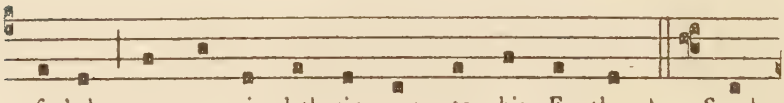
Victime paschali laudes Mode i



Chris-tians! to the Pas-chal Vic-tim * of- fer your thankful



prai-ses. The Lamb the sheep hath ransom'd : Christ, by sin un- de-
Death and life in a con-flict sore and wondrous con-



fi- led, re- con- ci- leth sin- ners to his Fa- ther. } Speak,
tended : life's Cap-tain, he that died, death-less reign-eth. } Bright

Ma- ry, de- clar- ing what thou saw- est way- far- ing? His
an- gels at- tes- ting, the shroud & nap- kin res- ting. The

tomb, who pass'd through its por- tal, his glo- ry, who rose from
Lord, my Hope hath a- ri- sen : to Ga- li- lee he go-

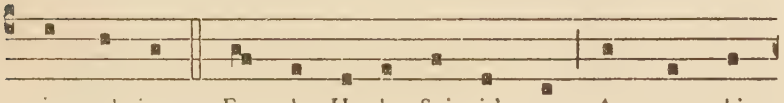
death im- mor- tal : } What Ma- ry saith re-ceive we, her sure
eth be- fore you. } We know that Christ is ri- sen, henceforth

word be- lie-ving, nor heed we tales of Jew- ry de- cei- ving. }
ev- er liv- ing : have mer- cy, Vic- tor King, par-don giv- ing. }

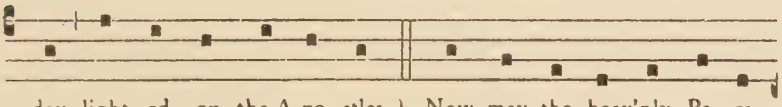
Whitsun-tide

Laudes Deo deuotas Mode viij

Ing to God your prai-ses high,* Voice & heart both mu-
Ci- ti- zens of hea-

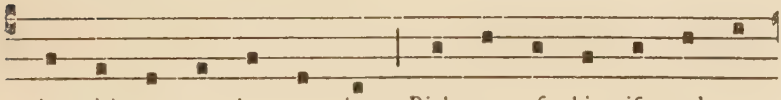


sic mak-ing, (For the Ho- ly Spi- rit's grace As on this
ven's king-dom.) In tongues of



day light- ed on the A-po- stles,) Now may the heav'nly Pa- ra-
fire, out of heav'n de- scend-ing.)

clete, A- bi- ding in us, wash out our of- fen- ces,) May
And make us tem- ples meet for his in- dwel-ling.)



he with- in our bo- soms place Rich store of his gifts and gra-
That we may con- form our life

ces to aid us, (So thro' the a- ges of a- ges) To God
to his bid- ding.) We may pro- claim Al- le- lu- ya.)

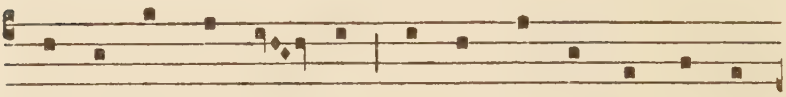
be all praise and pow- er and ho- nour and glo- ry.

Corpus Christi

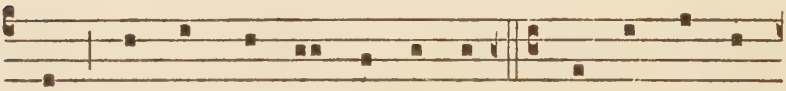
Lauda Syon Saluatorem Mode vij

Laud, O Sy- on, thy Sal- va-tion,* Laud with hymns of
Bring him all the praise thou knowest, He is more than

ex- ul- ta- tion Christ, thy King and Shep-herd true: } Spe- cial
thou be- stow- est, Ne- ver canst thou reach his due. } From his



theme for glad thanks- giv- ing Is the quick'ning and the liv-
hands of old par- ta- ken, As we know by faith un- sha-

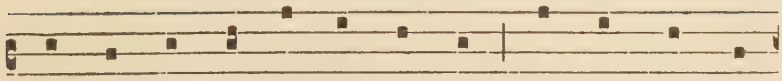


ing Bread to- day be- fore thee set: } Full and clear ring
ken, Where the Twelve at sup- per met. } Here the new law's

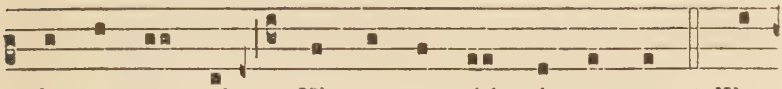
out thy chant-ing, Joy nor sweet- est grace be want-ing, From thy
new ob- la- tion, By the new King's re- ve- la- tion, Ends the

heart let prai- ses burst: For to- day the Feast is hold- en When
form of an- cient rite: Now the new the old ef- fa- ces, Truth

the in- sti- tu- tion old- en Of that Sup- per was re-hears'd. }
a- way the sha- dow cha- ses, Light dis- pels the gloom of night. }

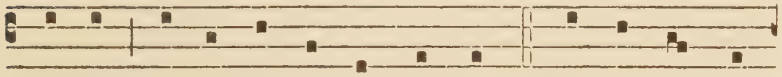


What he did, at sup- per seat- ed, Christ or- dain'd to
And, his rule for gui-dance ta- king, Bread and wine we



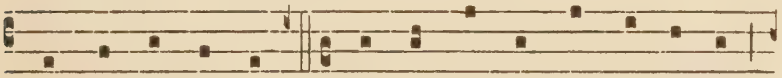
be re- peat- ed, His me- mo- rial ne'er to cease : { Won-
hal- low, ma- king Thus our Sa- cri- fice of peace. { Sight

drous truth, to Chris- tians giv- en, Bread be-comes his Flesh from
hath fail'd, nor thought con- ceiv- eth, But a daunt- less faith be-

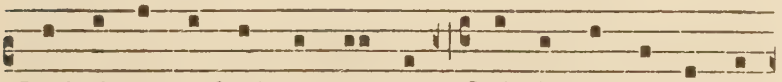


hea- ven, To his Blood is turn'd the wine : { Here be- neath these
liev- eth, Rest- ing on a pow'r di- vine. { Blood is pour'd and

signs are hid- den Price-less things, to sense for- bid- den, Signs not
Flesh is bro- ken, Yet in ei- ther wondrous to- ken Christ en-



things are all we see : { Who- so of this Food par- ta- keth
tire we know to be. { Thousands are, as one, re- ceiv- ers,



Rend-eth not the Lord, nor break-eth, Christ is whole to all that
One, as thousands of be- liev- ers, Eats of him who can- not

taste : { Bad and good the Feast are shar- ing, Oh ! what di- verse
waste. { Life to these—to those dam- na- tion, See how like par-

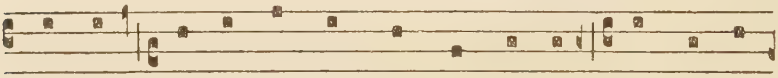
dooms pre-par-ing, End- less death, or end-less life : } When the Sa-
ti- ci- pa- tion Is with un- like is- sues rife. } Naught the pre-

cra- ment is bro- ken, Doubt not, but be- lieve 'tis spo- ken, That
cious Gift di- vi- deth, Break- ing but the sign be- ti- deth, Je-

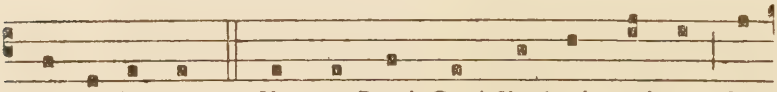
each se- ver'd out-ward to- ken Doth the ve- ry whole con-tain : }
sus still the same a- bi- deth, Still un- bro- ken doth re- main. }

*

Lo! the An- gels' Food is giv- en To the pil- grim who hath
Truth, the an- cient types ful- fil- ling, I- saac bound, a vic- tim



stri- ven ; See the chil-dren's Bread from hea- ven, Which on dogs
wil- ling, Pas-chal lamb, its life- blood spil-ling, Man- na to



may not be spent : } Ve- ry Bread, Good Shepherd, tend us, Je-
the fa-thers sent. } Thou who all things canst and know-est, Who

su, of thy love befriend us, Thou re-fresh us, thou de-fend us,
on earth such Food be-stow- est, Grant us with thy saints, tho' lowest,

Thine e- ter- nal good-ness send us In the land of life to see : }
Where the heav'nly Feast thou shew-est, Fel-low-heirs & guests to be. }

The Sequences and Hymn Melodies are published in one volume by the Plainsong and Mediæval Music Society: they can also be obtained separately at very cheap rates if taken in quantities.

The Priest's part of the Ordinary (and Special) of the Mass consisting of the Epistle and Gospel tones versicles, Sursum Corda and prefaces, are to be found in the Sarum form in the Altar Book published by the De la More Press. The Sarum form is infinitely to be preferred to the inaccurate and often clumsy Merbecke arrangement which is so generally used, often with Stainer's inappropriate harmonies.

Mattins and Evensong.

The Versicles and Responses. The inflexions used for the versicles and responses are of the simplest kind, and should be sung lightly and with natural speech rhythm. It is better, if possible, to do without any organ accompaniment. The inflexions that follow the Pater Noster follow the rule that if the sentence ends with a monosyllable, the last note shall be a relatively high one, while if the sentence ends with a word of more than one syllable, the last note shall be a relatively low one.

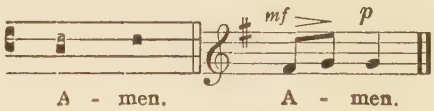
℣ O Lord, shew thy mercy up - on us, ℟ And grant us thy sal - va - tion.

These inflexions have remained the same from earliest times and are still the best for all occasions.

The elaborate harmonised versions which date from Elizabethan times, are beautiful, judged from the purely musical standpoint, especially the Tallis, the Byrd, or the Tomkins settings, but they are quite unsuited to congregational singing owing to their contrapuntal character and high range of the soprano part. It is sometimes argued that as the plainsong is the tenor part in Tallis, the people should sing this, rather than the soprano melody, but the naturally strict time which is necessary for a good performance of these settings makes the plainsong part much too rigid and drawn out to allow of any natural singing of the part. A simple harmonisation with the plainsong as the top part is better because this does allow of a fairly free rendering, and should be the alternative if the unadorned plainsong is not feasible. The plainsong, with a

simple harmonisation, is published by the Church Music Society, and can be obtained from the Oxford University Press.

The Amens to the Collects should be taken up promptly, care being taken to see that the last note is sung diminuendo.

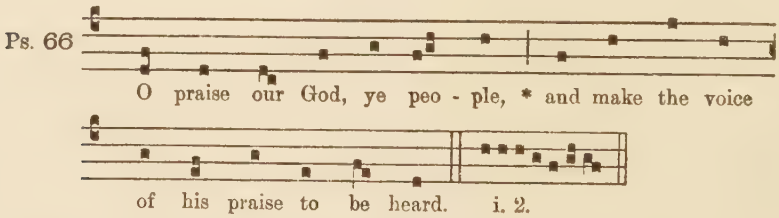


The preparatory prayers and everything after the third Collect should be said. It is also advisable to say the Credo as far as the Versicle " The resurrection of the body," and the Pater Noster as far as the " and lead us not into temptation " when the priest will take it up and the people come in with the final response.

Psalms and Antiphons. The psalms have been dealt with earlier in this book, and it only remains now to speak of the antiphons.

The antiphons to the psalms were originally intended to be used before and after every verse, but they are now only used before the first verse and after the Gloria. This is often shortened still more by only giving out the initial few notes at the beginning, and singing the whole antiphon at the close.

In either case this opening is sung by the Precentor or Cantor in the same way as the first half verse of the psalms, the full choir then joining in. At the close the whole antiphon is usually sung full throughout. The psalm antiphons are mostly short and set to words from the psalms themselves, or forming a commentary on them.



This is a typical specimen in the first mode, for psalm 66.

The Psalm antiphons for the whole year, edited by the late Dr. Palmer, are published by the Plainsong and Mediæval Music Society.

The Canticles. The pointing of the Gospel canticles is the same as that of the psalms except that the intonation is used for every

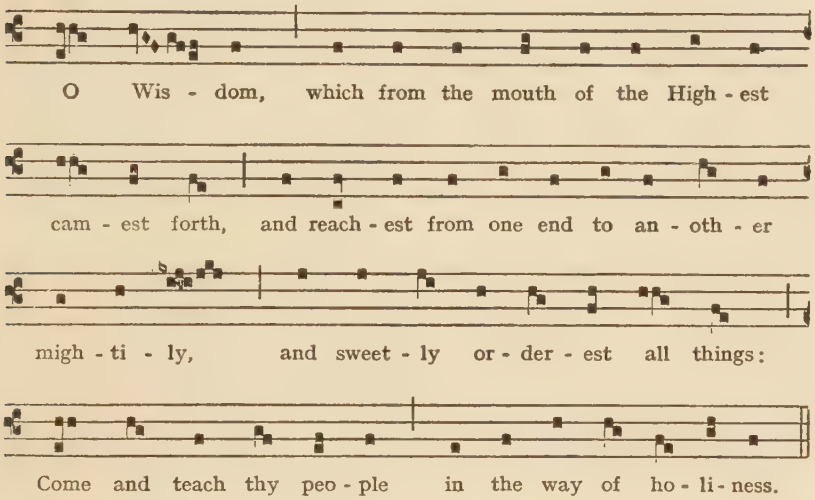
verse and there are certain solemn forms of the intonation and mediation that are used on Festivals and Holy Days.

These solemn forms will be found in the table of tones at the end of the book.

The Canticle antiphons are longer and more elaborate than those of the psalms, but they contain some of the finest and most beautiful plainsong we possess.

The greater O's which are used from O Sapientia to Christmas are a case in point:

II. 2.



Antiphons to Magnificat for the year are published by St.Mary's Press, and the greater O's by the Society.

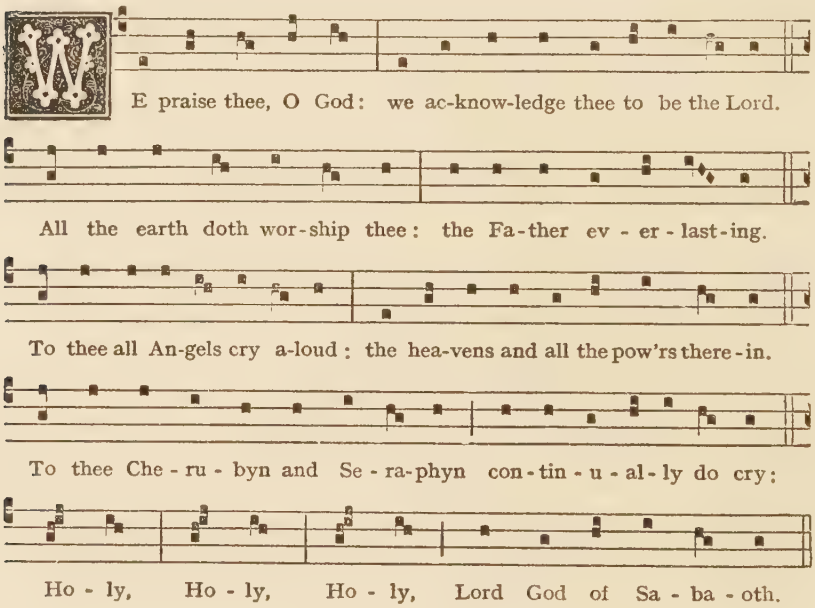
There has been a great revival lately of the use of these fine melodies. Even in places where plainsong is not generally acceptable, they can be utilised in conjunction with settings of the Magnificat to the second tone with fauxbourdons for alternate verses, such as those by Holmes or in XIV. Fauxbourdons to Magnificat published by the Society. The present popularity of fauxbourdons and descant for occasional verses not only provides for greater contrast and relief, but gives the choirmaster a means of appeasing the very general desire of choristers to sing in four part harmony.

There is the greatest beauty in unisonal singing of pure plainsong, but as in all other things familiarity is needed before the beauty can be really appreciated, and it is common knowledge that

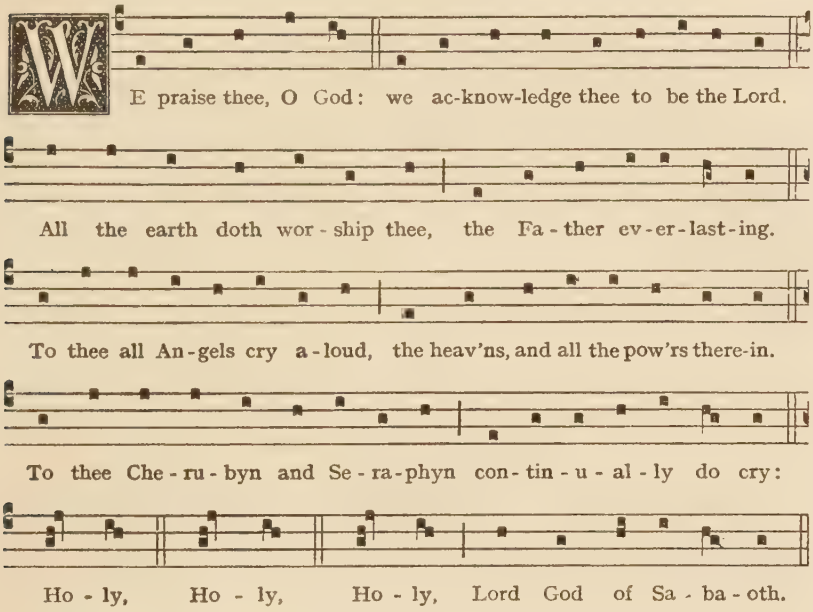
many who will wholeheartedly join in Community singing of popular songs, will demand a part of their own if they are to be relied upon to attend church choir practices regularly. The expedient of fauxbourdons will provide this without in any way diminishing the artistic merit of the whole, and so will enable plainsong to be heard when otherwise it would be a closed book.

Te Deum. The Te Deum, owing to its construction, does not lend itself kindly to the ordinary chant or tone. Many of the verses are so short that it becomes necessary either unduly to lengthen certain syllables to the detriment of the intelligibility of the text, or to curtail the chant or tone to the detriment of the intelligibility of the music.

The original Authentic setting is in a kind of variable chant form, containing a small amount of ornament, but not really difficult and quite admirably adapted to the varying moods of this fine hymn. This setting is included in the *Manual of Plainsong* (Novello) and is also published separately by the Plainsong and Mediæval Music Society.



A very interesting and syllabic arrangement to English words of the time of Edward VI., is useful either as an alternative to the above or in cases where a simple setting is needed. It is published by Novello and Co.



A setting by Viadana in simple polyphonic style has been arranged to English words with alternate verses to the Authentic Plainsong by Mr. Royle Shore, who is also responsible for a small modern notation edition for the use of the congregation. (Novello and Co.)

The Litany. Wherever possible, the Sarum Processional form should be used. This is a much more varied and characteristic setting than that of the reformers of 1544. It is included in the *Manual of Plainsong* (Novello) and may be obtained separately from the P.M.M.S. If the latter setting is used it should be treated in plainsong and not sung in the harmonised form known as Ferial.

Compline. The music of the service of Compline has been arranged from the *Salisbury Antiphonale,* by the late Rev. Dr. Palmer, and published by St. Mary's Press, Wantage. It contains everything required for the whole year including all the special antiphons, hymns and psalms.

Requiem Services.

The music of the Vespers of the Dead, the Requiem Mass, and the Burial Service (1662), has been arranged by the late Dr. Palmer to English words, and is available in the volume published by the P.M.M.S. All the special antiphons, introits, Grails, Tracts, Offertories, etc., are included, and although only the most expert choir could hope to do justice to this wonderful music, there are few places where a certain portion could not be utilised.

VI. THE USE OF THE ORGAN

The accompaniment of plainsong should be reduced to the smallest possible minimum. Ideally there should be none at all. Failing this counsel of perfection let the organ be used only for the purpose of giving a suitable background or support when necessary. As a general rule, the perfection of performance will be in inverse ratio to the amount of organ tone, which must never be thick or heavy. A working knowledge of harmony up to Common Chords and Inversions, Passing-notes and Suspensions is essential unless the player relies on prepared accompaniments. All discords except such as are induced by suspensions or passing-notes should be rigorously excluded, and as only Modal Tonality is available it is obvious that anything in the nature of chromatic harmony will be impossible. Avoid over-elaboration. In very rare cases will a chord be required for every note of the melody: this method will inevitably hamper the natural flow and rhythm. The other extreme of holding one chord for a long melodic passage is also unsatisfactory as a general basis of harmonisation owing to paucity of interest. It is effective at times if used sparingly and for some special purpose.

The best method is that in which the harmonic changes coincide with the neumatic or textual accents. It may be a complete change of chord, or merely a moving from one position to another of the same chord. Only a careful study of the music will reveal which notes require treating harmonically and which can be left as passing-notes. Unprepared harmonisations are rarely successful.

The following examples show these three methods applied to a simple syllabic melody and a more elaborate neumatic one.

1

I be-lieve in one God, the .... Fa-ther al-mighty, ma-ker of heaven and earth,

and of all things vis - i - ble and..... in - vis - i - ble.

2

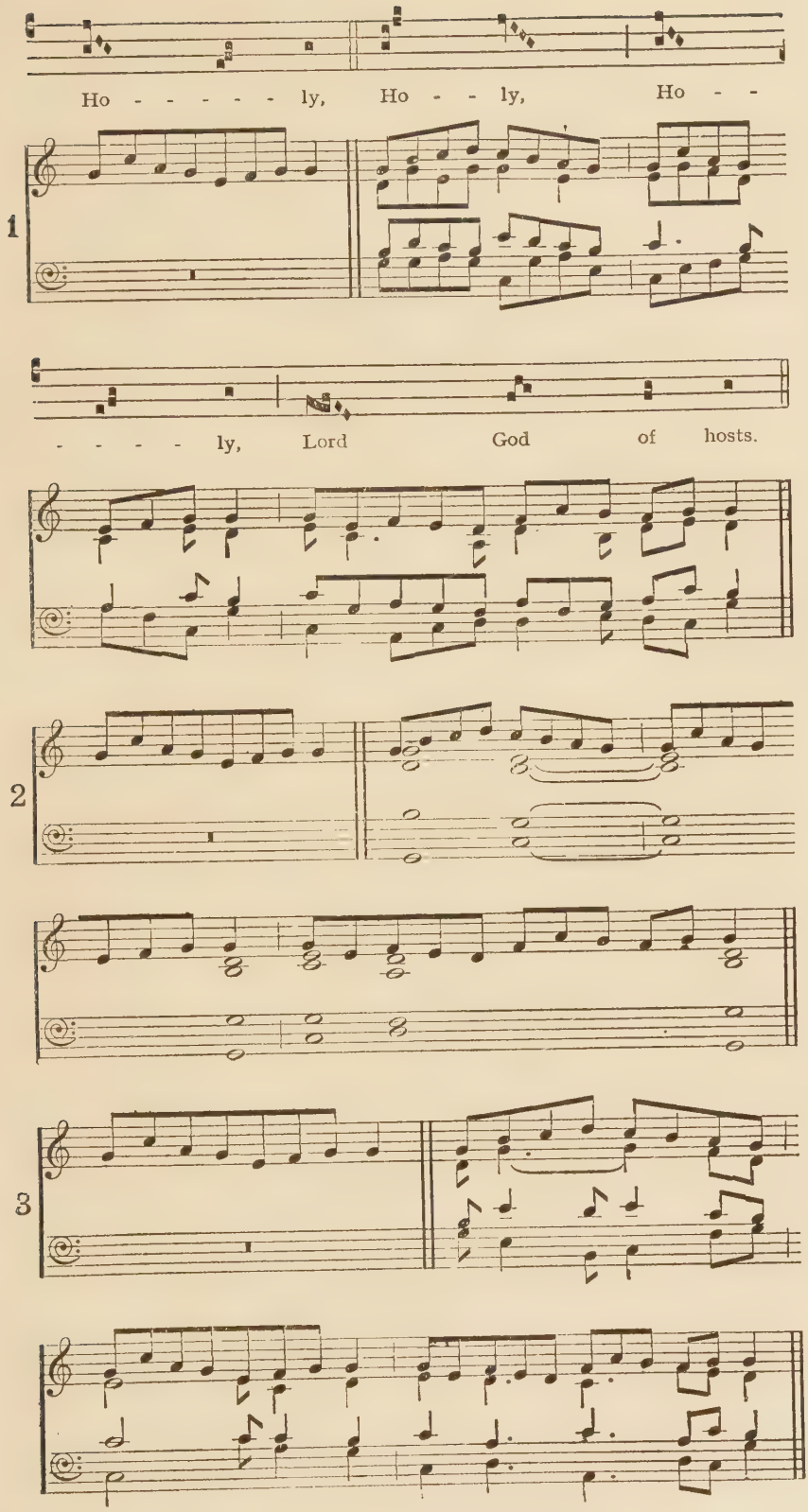
I be-lieve in one God, the.... Fa-ther al-migh-ty, ma-ker of heaven and earth,

and of all things vis - i - ble and..... in - vis - i - ble.

3

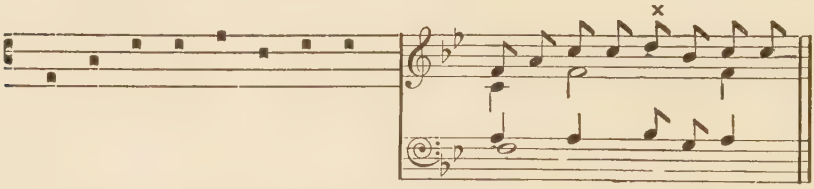
I be-lieve in one God, the.... Fa-ther al-migh-ty, ma-ker of heaven and earth,

and of all things vis - i - ble and..... in - vis - i - ble.

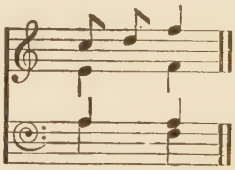

Ho - - - - - - ly, Ho - - ly, Ho - -
1
- - - - - ly, Lord God of hosts.
2
3

Additional Harmonic Rules.

1. The second inversion of the triad should never be used except over a pedal bass.

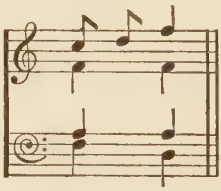


2. Passing-notes and auxiliary notes may only be used when they conform with the rule of passing on to or returning to a harmony note. It will readily be seen that the following is bad, because as

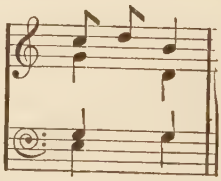


the D leaps to the F it can only be treated as a harmony note.

The correct treatment would be—

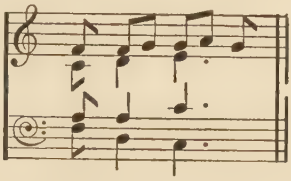


The only exception to this rule is when the discordant note leaps down a third and is anticipatory of the secondary chord.



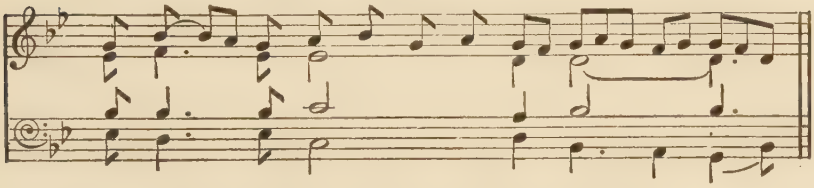
3. Notes of anticipation may be freely used.

Bless - ed is he



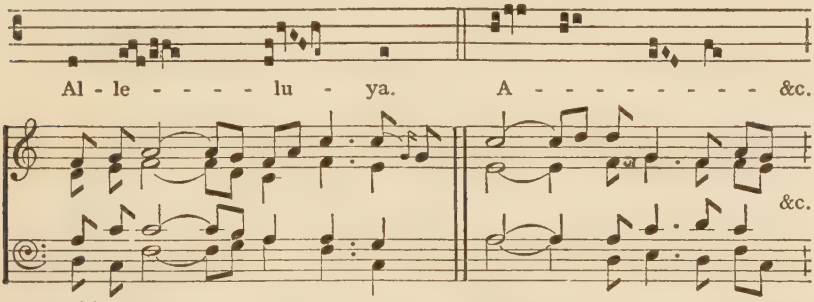
4. Changing-notes of all kinds are always good.

But send..... the pro - mise of the Fa - ther... on us.....

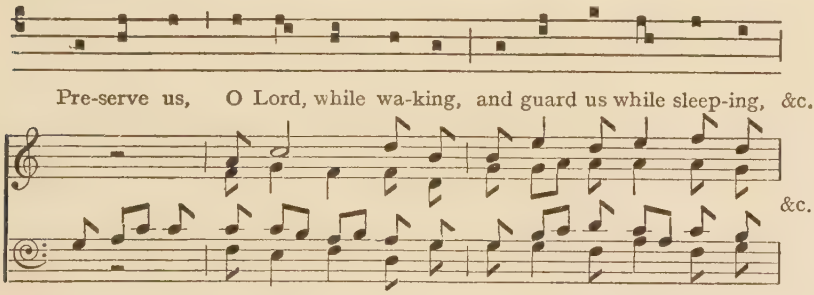


ADDITIONAL FORMS OF ACCOMPANIMENT.

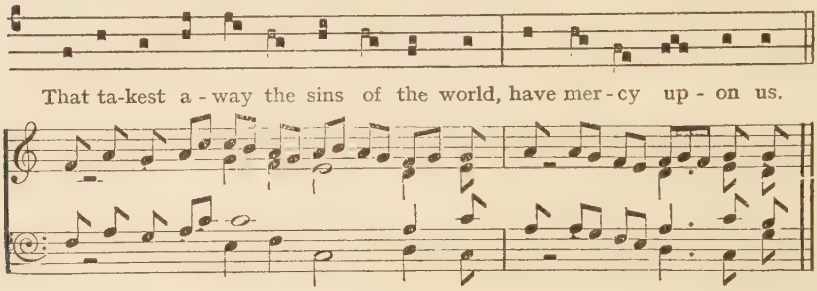
1. The melody may frequently be omitted with advantage, particularly when it is neumatic.



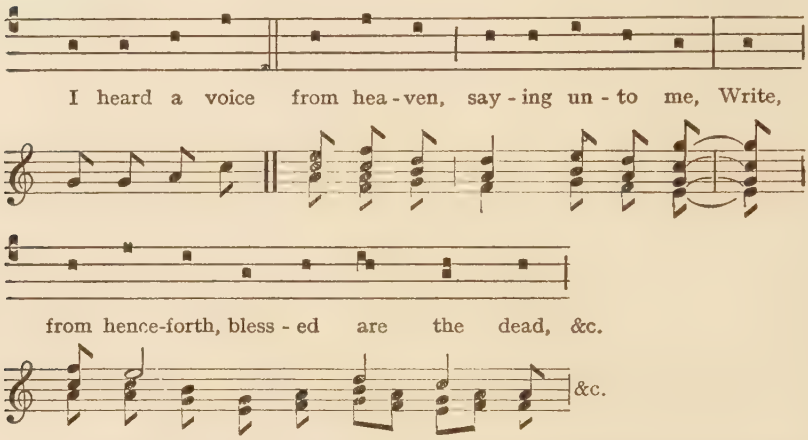
2. The melody may be placed in the tenor part in the manner of fauxbourdon.



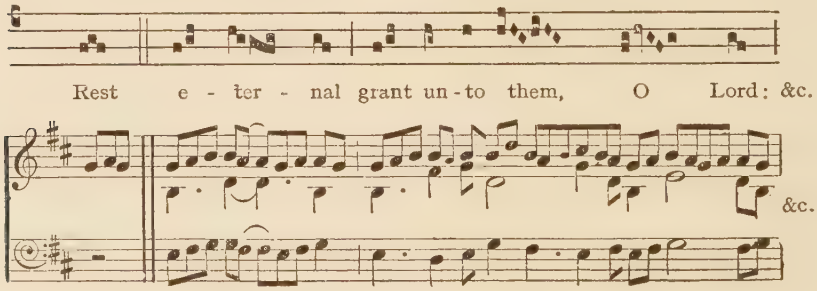
3. The harmony may be stopped and the accompaniment played in octaves with the melody.



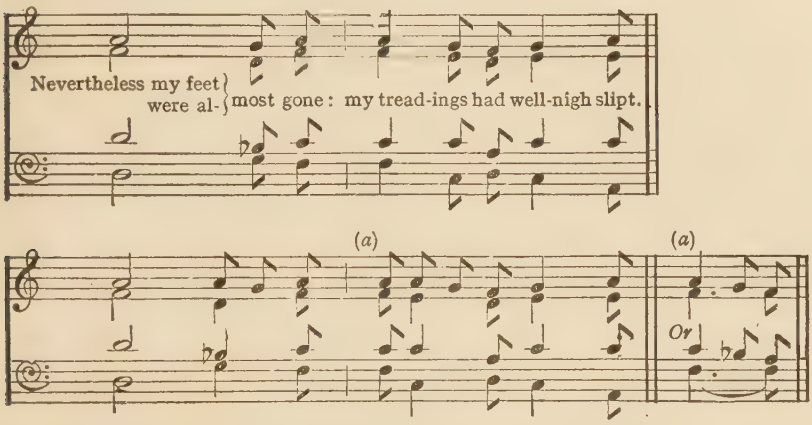
4. The whole accompaniment may be placed in the treble stave.



5. Three-part harmony may be used to advantage and gives a lighter and smoother effect.



In accompanying the psalms, care should be taken never to make a change of harmony on a weak syllable. It can generally be avoided either by holding on to the previous chord or by making the change earlier. This sometimes necessitates a change of chord on the reciting-note itself.



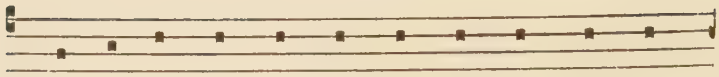
In the matter of registration, it will be found that stopped diapasons, flutes (both 8 and 4 ft.) light-voiced gambas, dulcianas and kindred stops will suit the genius of plainsong much better than open diapasons and heavy reeds except for very occasional use in full verses. In the Pedal Organ department use 16 ft. stops very sparingly as they are apt to make the movement cumbersome; 8 ft. stops are better, 16 ft. tone is really satisfactory only in long sustained notes.

The whole subject of Plainsong Accompaniment has been dealt with most admirably and exhaustively by Mr. J. H. Arnold in his book published under that title by the Oxford University Press (12/6), and I strongly recommend it to all who are interested in this branch of the subject. There are numberless illustrations (including the whole of the Special and Ordinary of the Mass), which are perfect specimens of artistic ingenuity and musical excellence.

In conclusion, may I exhort everyone in general, and the Organist and Choirmaster in particular, to *sing* plainsong (even when playing), for in that way, and that way only, will the music reveal its soul and give out its message to the world.

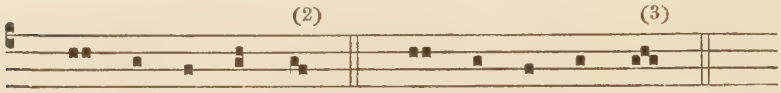
The Tones of the Psalms

TONE I



THis is the in - to - na - tion of the First Tone,

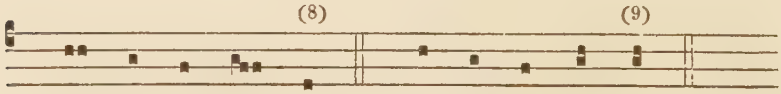
and this is the me - di - a- tion : . . and this the end- ing.



. . . and this the end- ing. . . . and this the end- ing.

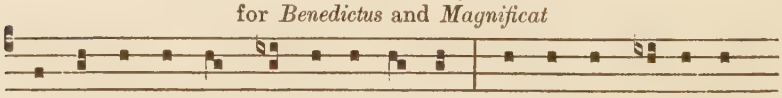
. . . and this the end- ing. . . . and this the end- ing.

. . . and this the end - ing. . . . and this the end - ing.



. . . and this the end - ing. . . . and this the end- ing.

Solemn form of Intonation, Mediation &c.
for *Benedictus* and *Magnificat*



Bles-sed be the Lord God of Is- ra- el : for he hath ví- si-ted &c.
My soul doth mag- ni- fy the Lord : and my spí-rit &c.

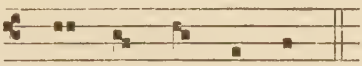
TONE II

THis is the in - to - na - tion of the Se - cond Tone,

(1)

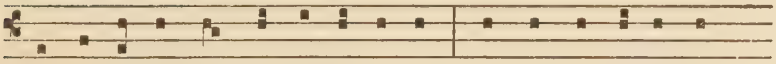
and this is the me- di - a - tion : . . . and this the end- ing.

(2)



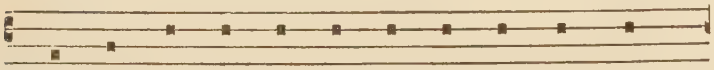
. . . and this the end- ing.

Solemn form of Intonation, Mediation &c.
for *Benedictus* and *Magnificat*



Bles-sed be the Lord God of Is- ra- el : for he hath ví- si- ted &c.
My soul doth mag- ni- fy the Lord : and my spí-rit &c.

TONE III

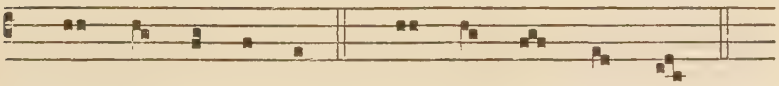


THis is the in - to - na - tion of the Third Tone,

(1)

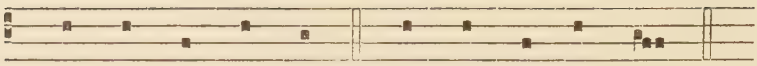
and this is the me - di - a - tion : . . . and this the end- ing.

(2) (3)



. . . and this the end- ing. . . . and this the end - ing.

(4) (5)



. . . and this the end - ing. . . . and this the end - ing.

(6)

. . . and this is the end - ing.

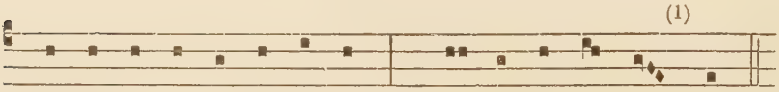
Intonation for Canticles

Bles - sed be &c.
My soul doth &c.

TONE IV

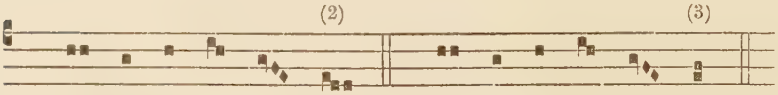
THis is the in - to - na - tion of the Fourth Tone,

(1)



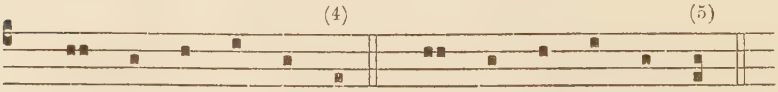
and this is the me - di - a-tion : . . . and this is the end - ing.

(2) (3)



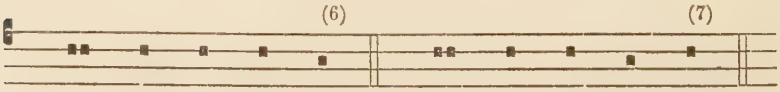
. . . and this is the end- ing. . . . and this is the end- ing.

(4) (5)



. . . and this is the end- ing. . . . and this is the end- ing.

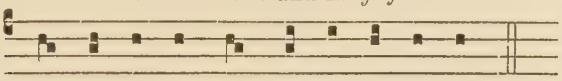
(6) (7)



. . . and this the end - ing. . . . and this the end - ing.

. . . and this the end - ing. . . . and this the end - ing.

Solemn form of Intonation and Mediation
for *Benedictus* and *Magnificat*

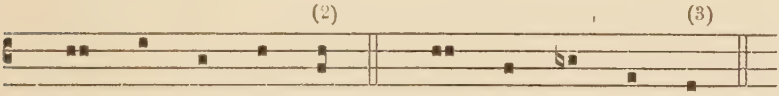


Bles-sed be the Lord God of Is - ra - el :
My soul doth mag-ni - fy the Lord :

TONE V

THis is the In - to - na - tion of the Fifth Tone,

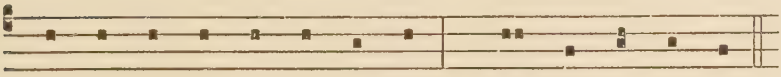
and this is the me - di - a - tion : . . . and this the end - ing.



. . . and this the end - ing. . . . and this the end - ing.

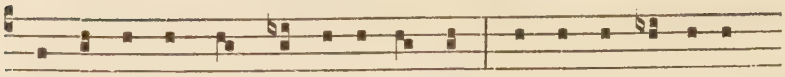
TONE VI

THis is the In - to - na - tion of the Sixth Tone,



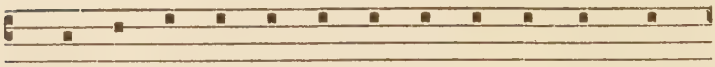
and this is the me - di - a - tion : . . . and this the end - ing.

Solemn form of Intonation, Mediation &c.
for *Benedictus* and *Magnificat*



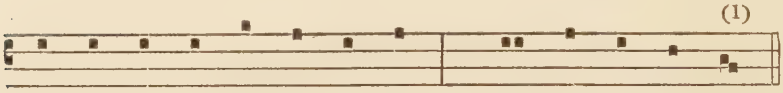
Bles-sed be the Lord God of Is - ra - el : for he hath ví- si-ted &c.
My soul doth mag-ni-fy the Lord : and my spí-rit &c.

TONE VII



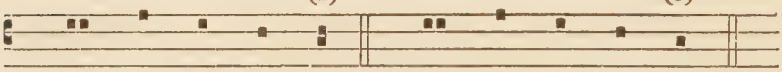
THis is the in - to - na- tion of the Se-venth Tone,

(1)



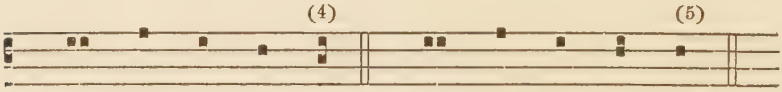
and this is the me - di - a - tíon : . . . and this the end- ing.

(2) (3)



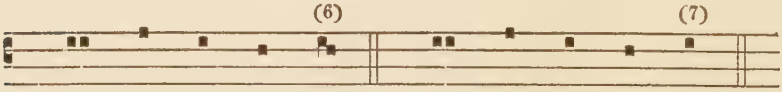
. . . and this the end - ing. . . . and this the end - ing.

(4) (5)



. . . and this the end - ing. . . . and this the end - ing.

(6) (7)



. . . and this the end - ing. . . . and this the end - ing.

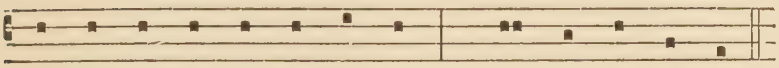
Intonation for Canticles

Bles - sed be &c.
My soul doth &c.

TONE VIII

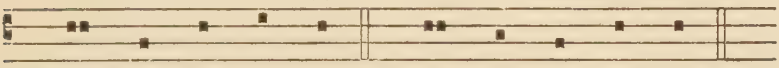
THis is the in - to - na - tion of the Eighth Tone,

(1)



and this is the me - di - a - tion : . . . and this the end - ing.

(2) (1)

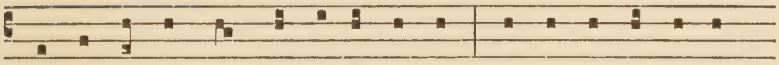


. . . and this the end - ing. . . . and this the end - ing.

(4)

. . . and this the end - ing.

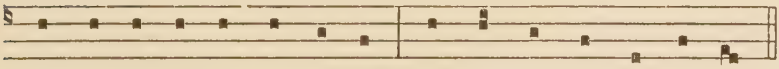
Solemn form of Intonation, Mediation &c.
for *Benedictus* and *Magnificat*



Bles-sed be the Lord God of Is - ra - el : for he hath ví - si-ted &c.
My soul doth mag-ni - fy the Lord : and my spí - rit &c.

THE IRREGULAR OR *PEREGRINE* TONE

THis is the in - to - na - tion of the Ir - re - gu-lar Tone,



and this is the me - di - a - tion : and here you have the end-ing.

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